Camas Post Office Moves Small House To New Role In '39

MARCH, 1939, is date of this photo. Don Morgan did his best to remember who was living in nearby houses at the time. The dark-colored house was owned by the Funkhouser family, he thought; the small house next to the Post Office construction belonged to a family named Sadd; the greenhouse visible in rear of picture belonged to Ward Haley's dad; other homes in neighborhood were at one time occupied by the Kitzing and Eymer families.

By NANCY FREEMAN

Camas Postmaster Howard Martin cleaned out a cubbyhole the other day and came up with some treasures for old-timers and other Post Office watchers: newsclippings and pictures about the post office from 30 years ago.

A crowd of 600 watched the dedication of the Camas Post Office in August, 1939. The project represented a total investment of $81,000. On hand were state assistant postmaster general, Ambrose O'Connell; the late W. K. Peery, who was master of ceremonies; Congressman Martin F. Smith; the Rev. L. C. Weitzenkamp and Mayor Woodworth. The Washougal drum and bugle corps played before the beginning of the ceremony.

It was two years later, January, 1941, that the mural depicting physical and human resources of the area – Camas' first mural – was placed on the west wall of the post office lobby.

Lumber, dairying, fruit and grain are represented in the mural. An Indian woman is shown with a salmon. According to the 1941 article from the Post-Record, "she has the peculiarly flattened forehead of the local redskins. The settler is shown with his family in an environment of lumbering against a background of the Columbia River."

You can see the mural in the Camas Post Office today.

It took a California artist, Douglas Nicholson of Berkley, eight months to complete the mural.

"The mural is worked out in reddish tones to go with the marked reds of the post office's red marble wainscote, terra cotta red tile floors and reddish walls," he said.

During the dedication of the local post office in 1939, O'Connell hailed it as "a symbol of a great democracy and its ideals". "One that a city many times as large as Camas may well be proud of," according to Congressman Smith.